

## Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 L-03 IGA-02 EB-07

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2318

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ SCSA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 CARACAS 2760

DEPARTMENT PLEASE NOTIFY WILLIAMS (ARA/PLC)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, VE

SUBJECT: CHANGES IN FOREIGN MILITARY TRAINING PROGRAM

REF: STATE 051768

SUMMARY. WHILE INCREASING COSTS OF FOREIGN MILITARY TRAINING PROGRAM WOULD NOT MATERIALLY AFFECT OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH VENEZUELA, SUCH MEASURES AS THE FASCELL AMENDMENT, WHICH WOULD CUT OFF ALL MAP TRAINING FUNDS FOR VENEZUELA SPECIFICALLY, COULD PROVE MOST DIVISIVE AND BECOME AN ABRASIVE POLITCAL ISSUE WITH THE GOV. UNTIL OUTCOME OF FASCELL AMENDMENT AND GOV REACTION ARE KNOWN, IT IS DIFFICULT TO PREDICT COURSE VENEZUELAN ARMED FORCES MIGHT FOLLOW TO ACQUIRE MILITARY TRAINING, ALTHOUGH VARIOUS ALTERNATIVES ARE OPEN TO THEM, MOST OF WHICH WOULD HAVE ADVERSE IMPACT ON OUR GOOD RELATIONS WITH VENEZUELAN ARMED FORCES. END SUMMARY.

1. COMMENTS BELOW ARE KEYED TO QUESTIONS POSED IN PARA. 5 A THRU F REFTEL.

2. PARA. 5 A - VENEZUELAN MILITARY LEADERS WILL VIEW INCREASED  
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COSTS AS A FACT OF LIFE BROUGHT ABOUT MY WORLDWIDE INFLATION;

SUCH INCREASES IN AND OF THEMSELVES ARE UNLIKELY TO HAVE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS. AS A PRACTICAL MATTER, INCREASED COSTS WILL PROBABLY FORCE THE VENEZUELAN MILITARY TO REVIEW THEIR TRAINING PROGRAMS, ESPECIALLY FOR FMS ("PURCHASED") TRAINING. THIS REVIEW PROCESS, HOWEVER, WILL LIKELY BE TIME-CONSUMING AND ITS EFFECTS MAY BE FELT ONLY OVER THE LONGER TERM.

THE IMMEDIATE BILATERAL ISSUE WITH THE GOV IN THE MILITARY TRAINING AREA IS NOT INCREASED COSTS, BUT THE FATE OF THE FASCELL AMENDMENT, WHICH WOULD CUT OFF ALL MAP TRAINING FUNDS FOR VENEZUELA. THE FASCELL AMENDMENT SINGLES OUT VENEZUELA IN WHAT IS SEEN HERE AS UNJUSTIFIED "DISCRIMINATION" AND WOULD BECOME A SERIOUS BILATERAL ISSUE IF WRITTEN INTO LAW. THE GOV WOULD SEE THIS STEP AS A POLITICALLY ANTAGONISTIC ACT. UNTIL THE OUTCOME OF THE FASCELL AMENDMENT AND THE VENEZUELAN REACTION TO IT ARE KNOWN, THEREFORE, PREDICTIONS OF GOV ATTITUDES TOWARDS MILITARY TRAINING PROGRAMS WILL OF NECESSITY BE SPECULATIVE.

3. PARA. 5 B - TRAINING INTERESTS VARY WITH EACH MILITARY SERVICE. FOLLOWING SUMMARIZES RECENT PREFERENCES BY SERVICES:

A) ARMY. MANAGEMENT; LOGISTICS; PROFESSIONAL; TECHNICAL. LAST YEAR TECHNICAL TRAINING WAS HIGH ON THE SCALE BECAUSE OF HELICOPTER ACQUISITION. FMS "PURCHASED" TRAINING OVER PAST TWO YEARS WAS IN PROFESSIONAL AND MANAGEMENT AREAS.

B) NAVY. PROFESSIONAL; MANAGEMENT; TECHNICAL. FMS TRAINING OVER PAST TWO YEARS WAS IN MANAGEMENT AND TECHNICAL TRAINING.

C) AIR FORCE. AIR CREW; PROFESSIONAL. FMS TRAINING FOLLOWED SAME PRIORITIES.

THE GOV IS PAYING FOR FMS "PURCHASED" TRAINING AND MAY BE ABLE TO PAY FOR AT LEAST SOME OF THE TRAINING POSITIONS PRESENTLY PROVIDED BY U.S. GRANT ASSISTANCE. IT IS NOT CONFIDENTIAL

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CLEAR NOW WHETHER AND TO WHAT DEGREE THE GOV WOULD, IN FACT BE WILLING TO MAKE SUBSTANTIAL BUDGET INCREASES FOR THAT PURPOSE.

4. PARA 5 C - PROFESSIONAL OFFICER TYPE TRAINING COURSES, ESPECIALLY "COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE" AND "U.S. NAVAL WAR COLLEGE" LEVEL COURSES ARE MOST IMPORTANT. MOST COUNTRY PERSONNEL LEARN US DOCTRINE AND RUB ELBOWS WITH

US OFFICERS. A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF THESE VENEZUELAN OFFICERS ATTAIN HIGHEST MILITARY RANK AND ARE POSITIVE INFLUENCE ON HOST COUNTRY MILITARY DOCTRINE AS WELL AS ON OUTLOOK TOWARD THE UNITED STATES. THESE COURSES ARE NOW BEING PROVIDED UNDER GRANT ASSISTANCE AND WILL PROBABLY BE PRESERVED SO LONG AS MAP-T FUNDS REMAIN AVAILABLE. HIGHER COSTS MIGHT LESSEN ENROLLMENT BUT MORE LIKELY SUCH COURSES WOULD CONTINUE TO BE ATTENDED AT THE EXPENSE OF LOWER PRIORITY COURSES WHICH WOULD PROBABLY BE CANCELLED. SHOULD MAP-T COSTS DOUBLE, ESSENTIAL TRAINING WOULD PROBABLY BE CONTINUED; HOWEVER, LOSS OF TECHNICAL TRAINING WOULD HAVE ADVERSE IMPACT ON AN ALREADY MARGINAL LOGISTICS CAPABILITY.

5. PARA 5 D - SEE PARAGRAPHS 3 AND 4 ABOVE. LOGISTICS AND TECHNICAL TRAINING WOULD PROBABLY BE CURTAILED SIGNIFICANTLY.

6. PARA. 5 E - AS NOTED ABOVE, HIGHER COSTS--AND CERTAINLY PASSAGE OF FASCELL AMENDMENT--WILL REQUIRE THAT VENEZUELAN ARMED FORCES EXAMINE OPTIONS FOR BADLY-NNEDED MILITARY TRAINING ABROAD. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF ALTERNATIVES OPEN TO GOV:

A) CONTINUE PRINCIPAL RELIANCE UPON U.S. FACILITIES - BECAUSE THE VENEZUELAN MILITARY GENERALLY CONSIDER U.S. SCHOOLS THE EPITOME OF QUALITY MILITARY TRAINING, THE GOV MAY DECIDE TO CONTINUE TO RELY MAINLY UPON U.S. TRAINING, EVEN THOUGH THE UNIT COST WOULD RISE SUBSTANTIALLY AND TOTAL NUMBER OF TRAINEES WOULD BE REDUCED.

B) SEEK TRAINING IN THIRD COUNTRIES - THIS APPROACH WOULD REPRESENT A MAJOR REORIENTATION OF THE VENEZUELAN

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ARMED FORCES AWAY FROM U.S. SCHOOLS TOWARD MILITARY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 CARACAS 2760

DEPARTMENT PLEASE NOTIFY WILLIAMS (ARA/PLC)

SCHOOLS ELSEWHERE, SUCH AS WESTERN EUROPE, CANADA, BRAZIL, AND ISRAEL. SINCE MAJOR VENEZUELAN MILITARY PURCHASES IN RECENT YEARS--SHIPS, ARMY TANKS AND ARTILLERY, AIR FORCE COMBAT AIRCRAFT--HAVE BEEN FROM THIRD COUNTRIES, THE GOV MIGHT SEE ADVANTAGES OF INTENSIFYING TRAINING ACTIVITIES WITH THOSE COUNTRIES AS WELL, PARTICULARLY IF THE THIRD COUNTRIES INVOLVED OFFER GRANT TRAINING OR COSTS WELL BELOW THOSE FOR U.S. SCHOOLS.

C) FORM LATIN AMERICAN TRAINING SCHOOLS - IN LINE WITH ITS OVERALL POLICY OF FOSTERING LATIN AMERICAN SOLIDARITY, THE GOV MAY CONCEIVABLY WISH TO EXAMINE THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING ONE OR TWO LATIN AMERICAN DEFENSE INSTITUTES, PERHAPS FOLLOWING A JOINT FUNDING FORMULA SIMILAR TO THAT USED IN SELA. THIS SEEMS A REMOTE ALTERNATIVE AT THIS TIME, HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF THE POLITICAL OBSTACLES TO SUCH A MOVE AND THE LACK OF RESOURCES, EXPERIENCE, AND TECHNOLOGY IN LATIN AMERICA TO FORM HIGH-QUALITY DEFENSE SCHOOLS.

7. PARA 5 F - ONE OUTCOME OF A GOV TRAINING REVIEW BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE ELIMINATION OF GRANT TRAINING  
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COULD BE A COMBINATION OF THE FOREGOING APPROACHES, GRADUALLY REDUCING DEPENDENCE UPON U.S. SCHOOLS, DOCTRINE, AND MATERIEL AND INCREASING USE OF THIRD COUNTRY FACILITIES, PERHAPS TOGETHER WITH SLIGHTLY INCREASE DEFENSE COLLABORATION WITH OTHER LATIN COUNTRIES. SUCH A DEVELOPMENT WOULD LEAD TO STEADY EROSION OF U.S. INFLUENCE WITH THE VENEZUELAN MILITARY AND AN INCREASING MILITARY ROLE HERE BY THIRD COUNTRIES.

8. COMMENT: IN OUR VIEW, TRAINING IS FAR AND AWAY THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN OUR RELATIONS WITH THE VENEZUELAN MILITARY AND THE KEY TO THE CLOSE AND CONSTRUCTIVE NATURE OF THAT RELATIONSHIP. THE FASCELL AMENDMENT, IF PASSED, WOULD ELIMINATE THIS HIGHLY VALUABLE PROGRAM WITHOUT PROVIDING AN OPPORTUNITY TO WORK OUT APPROACHES WHICH WOULD PERMIT THE GOV TO ASSUME MORE OF THE COSTS OF TRAINING CURRENTLY PROVIDED UNDER MAP. MORE IMPORTANTLY, PASSAGE OF THE FASCELL AMENDMENT COMBINED WITH THE LOSS OF FMS CREDIT--FOR VENEZUELA ONLY--AND THE GSP PROVISION OF THE TRADE ACT WILL CREATE THE CUMULATIVE IMPRESSION OF A DETERMINED EFFORT BY THE U.S. CONGRESS TO DISCRIMINATE AGAINST VENEZUELA ACROSS THE BOARD. SUCH A DEVELOPMENT WOULD SEVERELY AND NEEDLESSLY HARM OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THIS FRIENDLY COUNTRY.  
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